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ABSTRACT

This book provides a critical account of the psychological theories that have informed contemporary adult education theory and practice. Chapter 1 discusses the importance of balancing description, critique, and comments on each theory's influence on adult education and the need to understand psychological development throughout the life span. The following are among the topics discussed in chapters 2-9: humanistic psychology and the self-directed learner (humanistic clinical psychology and the contribution of self-directed learning and andragogy); the psychoanalytic approach (clinical insight and adult learning, individual identity and society, Erikson's psychosocial stages); development of identity during adulthood (methodological difficulties, social and historical bias, development as a dialectical process); development of intelligence and cognition (meaning of developmental stages and their relationships, developmental processes, criticisms of Piaget, Kohlberg's research on moral judgment, situated learning); learning styles (field dependence and field independence, malleability of cognitive styles, cognitive styles and adult learning, experiential learning); behaviorism (behavioral objectives); group dynamics and the group facilitator (group influence and experiential techniques); and critical awareness (interpretation and influence, critical understanding). The final chapter focuses on psychology as a foundation discipline in adult education. Twenty tables/figures are included. The bibliography contains 377 references. (MN)

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